



**MARTIN O'MALLEY**  
GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE  
100 STATE Circle  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1925  
(410) 974-3901  
(TOLL FREE) 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

September 12, 2011

The Honorable Beverley Swaim-Staley, Secretary  
Chair, Maryland Transportation Authority  
2310 Broening Highway, Suite 150  
Baltimore, MD 21224

Dear Chairman Swaim-Staley and MDTA Board Members:

After reviewing the extensive public comments and consulting numerous elected officials, business representatives, organizational leaders, and citizens, I believe that the Board has an opportunity to improve the toll plan that was originally announced on June 2, 2011. I am encouraged that you share this belief and are actively working to modify the plan based on public feedback you received during the 60-day public comment period and the ten public hearings held earlier in the summer. I have always been impressed by the Board's serious and responsible approach to its mission and remain confident that you will generate a fair outcome for the system's users while meeting your legal and fiduciary obligations.

As you prepare for the final deliberations on the proposed toll rate adjustments and other program changes, I ask for your consideration on a number of issues of public importance. First, I appreciate the work that has been done to review the magnitude of the proposed toll increases on recreational vehicles, vehicles with small trailers, and commercial truckers. I am particularly mindful of how significant the changes would be for the users of the Hatem, Bay and Nice bridges. I hope you can lessen these impacts in the final plan.

Second, I realize the Board is revisiting the elimination of several special discount programs. While it is important to modernize business practices, I think it is wise to allow users time to absorb changes gradually. It is certainly preferable to find ways to show some flexibility in the implementation of changes, rather than simply eliminate programs wholesale.

Third, I believe that the final toll plan should help encourage the expansion of the popular E-ZPass program. I trust the Board will take a hard look at how the proposed changes should incentivize the use of E-ZPass, furthering the operational and environmental benefits associated with this program.

While there is no question regarding the need to preserve the MDTA's strong financial standing and address the upkeep of its physical infrastructure, the current economic conditions require all public leaders – both elected and appointed – to demonstrate a keen sensitivity to the difficult circumstances facing families and businesses. I appreciate your sincere efforts to listen to the public and thank you for your service to the State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin O'Malley".

Governor

cc: The Maryland Transportation Authority Board Members:

Mr. Peter J. Basso

Rev. Dr. William C. Calhoun, Sr.

Ms. Mary Beyer Halsey

Ms. Louise P. Hoblitzell

Mr. Richard C. Mike Lewin

Mr. Michael J. Whitson

Mr. Walter E. Woodford, Jr., P.E.

Mr. A. Bradley Mims